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FM AMCONSUL LAGOS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8455
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 8284
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 0114
RUEHCD/AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ 0094
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 0101
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 0115

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 000076

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W
STATE FOR INR/AA
CIUDAD JUAREZ FOR DONNA BLAIR
ISTANBUL FOR TASHAWNA SMITH
SAO PAULO FOR ANDREW WITHERSPOON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/05/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [CASC](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: SIT REP #8: DIFFICULT COMMUNICATION WITH SSS

Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for reasons 1.4 (b and d)

¶1. (C) The Pivot-GIS Hostage Crisis Group has not met since February 2, however Control Risk Group (CRG) provided the following information. On February 3, Director of State Security Services (SSS) Alhaji Kola Adeshina told CRG that the Oral Rehydration Treatment (ORT) sachets had not been passed to the kidnappers because release of the hostages was considered imminent, thereby rendering the ORT's irrelevant in Adeshina's opinion. However, CRG was unable to make substantive contact with Adeshina on February 4. Eventually, CRG spoke with SSS Chief Security Officer Larry Pepple, who was optimistic the hostages would be released February 5 or 6.

¶2. (C) Bayelsa State Secretary of Government Godknows Igali told the Consul General that he had gotten involved in the negotiations for the American and British hostages as well as those regarding the Italian and Filipino victims. Igali thought the Italian and Filipino hostages would be released before the American as their capture had come before the American's. He mentioned that the amount demanded for "fees" by the kidnappers of the American had fallen significantly, but was still exorbitant. Also, he claimed hard-liners in various militant camps holding hostages were still arguing no hostage release until militant leader Dokubo-Asari was also released from GON detention. Still, Igali predicted release within a few days.

¶3. (C) Comment: Adeshina and Igali's optimism is not unusual. During prior kidnappings, similar predictions of imminent release were made. Most of these predictions were inaccurate and release took longer than a few days. Yet, these prior predictions were indicative of the positive direction negotiations had taken. We hope the same is the case this time. Thus, while release may not happen exactly at the hour or on the date predicted, that there appears to be an expressing of optimism may mean the real countdown to hostage release has begun.

BROWNE